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AN EXHIBITION OF JAPANESE PRINTS

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OF GREAT BRITAIN

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1948

FOREWORD

As we have seen several exhibitions since the war where the influence of Japanese art is so strongly marked, it would seem appropriate to renew our acquaintance with this source of inspiration, which maybe has not yet been exhausted. Japanese prints have too long been neglected and this exhibition should provide a source of enjoyment, both to those who are coming back to old friends and those who are seeing prints of such a quality for the first time.

The Council is grateful to Mr. Basil Gray of the British Museum who has organized and catalogued this exhibition, and to the owners who have so generously lent their collections.

INTRODUCTION

It is a pity that Japanese woodcuts of the best period, and especially if they are in good condition, are now so seldom to be found, for they were made to be sold for a small sum to the man in the street. It gives us a finer opinion of his taste and a more accessible feeling for art, to realize this. Unfortunately, it seems that periods when such things are possible are rare.

The basic technique of these prints is simple: they were cut with the knife on the plank of wood, generally cherry wood, inked with a brush and the impression rubbed off by hand without the use of a press. The hand-mixed inks and absorbent paper give the black impressions great richness. The cutting and printing were each the work of specialists distinct from the designer but on whom he could rely for the interpretation of his sketch, which would have been pasted on the plank and disappeared in the cutting. As in Europe, woodcuts started in China, and later in Japan by Chinese example, as an aid to devotional literature, the earliest known example being printed with a Buddhist *sutra* A.D. 868. Separate woodcut sheets were sold at Buddhist shrines in Japan to pilgrims. Just as in this country, the successor to the devotional woodcut was the political broadside and the illustrated chapbook, so in Japan the woodcut was later employed to illustrate popular books and on single sheets.

The figure dominating this early art was Hishikawa Moronobu, who designed his first woodcuts about 1670. He was a painter in the new popular school of Ukiyoye,

that is, the style of the passing hour, as opposed to the traditional styles which treated the 'noble' subjects of Japanese history or the learned themes of Chinese art. Moronobu was a leader in this movement which arose with the new age which opened with the fall of the Ashikaga and the rise of the Tokugawa Shogunate, and was widening the range of Japanese culture to include the new city classes, especially in the new capital Yedo, which is now Tokyo. Full of energy and irreverent in spirit, this new movement inherited all the refinement of taste and technical skills which had distinguished the Japanese for five hundred years previously. Moronobu's line shows a remarkable union of sophisticated grace with bold vigour, but it is no doubt impossible for us to sense altogether the daring of his approach to traditional or unheard-of themes.

One of the most striking signs of the new spirit had been the development of the popular or *Kabuki* drama from the beginning of the seventeenth century when it took its rise. Here again there was a debt to the past, to the classical *Nō* drama which had developed, since the fourteenth century, so fine a convention of expressive action and beauty of dance movement, so rich and pure a style of dress. The impersonality of the masked *Nō* dancers lies behind the deliberately impersonal style of painted make-up, at first sight so bizarre for us in the prints of actors. But all else in *Kabuki* is very different and strikingly new and popular. The plays were simple melodramas based upon well-known stories of love and jealousy, revenge and loyalty. Just at the turn of the century the appearance of one or two fine actors began to make the *Kabuki* a really creative art, and to raise in the audiences, mainly of artisans and shopkeepers, an enthusiasm which would welcome a pictorial record of their favourite stars.

The woodcut artists were quick to seize the opportunity and so long as the Ukiyoye school lasted the connexion with the theatre remained a close one. Indeed during the first half of the eighteenth century by far the greater number of prints were of actors in character. It is easy to identify the actors by the badges (*mon*) which they wore on their clothes, but it is much more difficult to identify the roles in which they are represented, since these are seldom indicated by inscription, unless in a note added by the first owner. Nevertheless, this is the surest method of dating the works of these early masters of the art who are generally spoken of as the Primitives; for no history of the art was written down until much later. Other landmarks were the development of colouring of the prints.

Up to 1742 only a single black block was used but most prints were coloured by hand, first with a red lead (*tan*), then with the addition of gold dust, from about 1724 and of lacquer to enrich the black (*urushiye*). In 1742 two blocks were first employed, the favourite colour scheme being green and pink (*beniye*) but yellow and blue were occasionally employed. For twenty years this restricted colouring was effectively used, its very simplicity demanding the most perfect control of design. For a short period after 1755 three-colour blocks were sometimes employed, but at the end of 1764 the art was greatly changed by the employment of five-colour blocks. Elaborate effects of colour printing had been used in China for the illustration of some painting manuals in the latter part of the seventeenth century, and these must certainly have been known in Japan. But it required more purposeful and instructed patrons than the ordinary theatregoer to call into being in Japan the special skill in cutting and printing which were required for the *nishikiye*, the fully developed colour print. Such

patrons were found in the clubs of Yedo literary men and amateurs, of whom the best known was Kyosen. The first *nishikiye* prints were got ready for the New Year of 1765 and the members of these clubs seem to have suggested some of the subjects, which were not of the theatre but of illustrations to poems and classic subjects interpreted in contemporary life especially by young girls of the day. The master of this style was Harunobu, who had already produced two-colour prints of such subjects, and his influence dominated the whole work of the early five-colour prints from 1765 until his death in 1770. But very soon after there were fresh developments. The artists Buncho and Shunsho ceased to design prints of this kind and once more sought in the stage for their subjects. There followed a period of intense activity when many hundreds of actor prints were designed without loss of quality. To us who are not familiar with the stories of the plays or the personality of the actors these may seem a little monotonous, but the selection here shown is not too big to tire, while at no period in the history of this school was the fecundity and brilliance of design greater than now. One point should be noted: as on the stage of ancient Greece and in England at the time of Shakespeare, the female parts were all taken by men, who usually specialized in such roles. The actors wore their hair cut in a special fashion which increased their mask-like appearance.

But developments were following fast upon one another. One of Harunobu's pupils, Koriusai, developed a most distinguished kind of fashion-plate in which the country girls could see the latest and most extreme styles of costume worn by the inmates of the Yoshiwara, the elegant Houses of Entertainment of the capital. This side of Ukiyoye remained a first interest of the school until the turn of the century, and we can follow in every

detail the rapid changes of fashion among the most gifted designers in the world in one of its most luxurious phases.

The decade of the eighties is dominated by Kiyonaga, in whose stately figures the art of the woodcut reaches its most distinguished period. Perfection in design and colouring could be carried no further. However the school was to produce two or three men of genius in the next half generation who found new directions in which to show the range of their sensibility and of the process. First of them was Utamaro, the charm of whose personality still speaks to us through the astonishing invention of his designs of women in every kind of occupation, in each of which he found fresh charms of movement and rhythm. Now, too, the fashion of representing both actors and beauties in half length, or head and shoulders, came in, and the pattern of the black hair, double printed for depth of impression, gave many fresh triumphs to the designer. None took more advantage of this than Utamaro and the cryptic figure of Sharaku, who, in a period of less than two years, in 1794 and 1795, drew over a hundred character studies of actors which astonish by their dramatic power and perception. He disappears but his influence no doubt helped Toyokuni to break new ground in his actor prints of that period which have a breadth of treatment unknown in the previous generation.

Now, too, there appeared on the scene an independent genius of another character. Hokusai, who was trained as an engraver, worked for a long time mainly as an illustrator of books and then, when over sixty, launched out on a new career of landscape prints which gave a completely new development to the last great period of the woodcut print. He had accumulated a great store of knowledge of the world in the sketch books which he filled with vivid drawings in his vital style—many of

them published in the series of woodcut volumes called the *Mangwa*. He was interested in novelties like European perspective, which Toyoharu had attempted to use in his prints; and the unfading Prussian blue which also could be had from Europe. His series, 'The Thirty-Six Views of Fuji', still hit the eye for the first time with the force of monumental creation; how astonishing they must have been at the time of publication! Indeed the Japanese have never wholly accepted this genius as worthy of unqualified admiration. But for us after his work even the versatile designs and charming effects of printing, the sense of open air and above all of moonlight nights of Hiroshige's art have a sense of the decline of the art which before his death in 1858 was indeed past its great days—but they had been extraordinarily productive. The eighty-one prints now shown are representative, but such an exhibition could be multiplied many times with prints of equal quality.

BASIL GRAY

CATALOGUE

HISHIKAWA MORONUBO (d. 1694)

1 Two pages from a woodcut-book, the *Koi no Minakami* (A Love Story) of 1683, a copy of which is in the British Museum (No. 7A):

Size: (each) 10 × 7⅛ in. *Lent by Mrs. Audrey Stewart.*

TORII KIYOMASU II (Worked about 1718–29)

According to Louis Ledoux, the first Kiyomasu was born about 1694 and worked about 1707–16. But Noguchi supposes that he was born about 1677. If so, he must have been the brother and not the son of Toyonobu I. Kiyomasu II was thus either the son or the adopted son and son-in-law of Kiyomasu I. He was born about 1702, and worked from about 1718 to 1729, when he took the name of Kiyonobu II.

2 *Right: Transplanting Rice.* No. 2 of a series: 'Four Seasons of the Farmer'; this is the summer sheet.

Signed: Yeshi Torii Kiyomasu. Coloured by hand.

Size: 13⅛ × 6⅜ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

Left: Reaping Rice. No. 3 of a series: 'Four Seasons of the Farmer', autumn.

Signed: Yeshi Torii Kiyomasu. Coloured by hand.

Size: 13⅛ × 6⅜ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

3 *The Actor Ichikawa Monnosuke I* (acted 1700–27) *as a woman holding a theatrical wig.*

Signed: Torii Kiyomasu. About 1725. Coloured by hand.

Size: 11⅜ × 5½ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.* (PLATE II)

TORII KIYOTADA (Worked about 1710–40)

Probably a pupil of Kiyonobu I. His work is rare.

4 *The Actor Nakamura Kichibei* (on the stage 1716–39) *as a bird catcher holding a wand.*

Signed: Torii Kiyotada. About 1730. Coloured by hand.

Size: 12⅝ × 6¼ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

TORII KIYONOBU II (Worked between 1730 and 1752)

Believed by some scholars to be identical with Kiyomasu II and to have taken the name of Kiyonobu after the death of Kiyonobu I in 1729.

5 *The Actor Segawa Kikunojō I* (who was on the stage from 1730 to 1748) *as Matsukaze, the salt burner on the beach at Suma.*

Signed: Torii Kiyonobu. About 1740. Coloured by hand.

Size: 12½ × 6⅛ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

ISHIKAWA TOYONOBU (b. 1711; d. 1785)

6 *The Actor Segawa Kikunojō I* (*d.* 1748) *as a* Kuge (*noble*) *seated looking at the Actor Sanokawa Ichimatsu I* (acted 1741–62) *as his attendant holding his sword.*

Signed: Tanjōdō Ishikawa Shūha Toyonobu. Seals: Ishikawa *uji* and Toyonobu. About 1745. Printed in green and red (*benizuri-ye*).

Size: 16⅝ × 11⅜ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.* (PLATE III)

7 *The Actor Sanokawa Ichimatsu* (acted 1741–62) *in character as a young man.*

Signed: Tanjōdō Ishikawa Shūha Toyonobu. About 1745. Printed in pink and green (*benizuri-ye*).

Size: 21 × 6⅝ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

ISHIKAWA TOYOMASA (Worked about 1767–73)

A pupil and perhaps son, of Ishikawa Toyonobu, Toyomasa seems to have ceased designing soon after 1770.

8 *Boys playing the Kotoro-kotoro game*, in which the 'he', called *oni* or the devil, tries to catch the hinder of the tail of boys. The fourth month, from a series of 'Twelve Months *à la Mode*'.

Signed: Ishikawa Toyomasa. About 1767. Printed in four colours. Three other prints of this series are in the British Museum (L.B. 2–4.).

Size: 10½ × 8 in. *Lent by Lord Harlech.*

OKUMURA MASANOBU (b. 1686; d. 1764)

For sixty years Masanobu worked as an independent artist, always with distinction. From 1724 to 1740 he was also a publisher of prints, and he must have had much energy.

9 *A girl seeking to detain a young man by taking hold of his umbrella which he is about to raise.*

Signed: Hogetsudō Okumura Masanobu. About 1755. Printed in three colours. Published by the artist's own firm, then managed by his son Genroku, under the name Tanchōsai.

Size: 11½ × 6 in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.* (PLATE IV)

TORII KIYOMITSU (b. 1735; d. 1785)

Probably a son of Kiyomasu II.

10 *The Actor Ōtani Hiroji II* (acted 1735–56) *in character.*

Signed: Torii Kiyomitsu. About 1755, when the third block was first used. Printed in three colours, over-printing making a fourth tint. Publisher: Yeijūdō.

Size: 12⅛ × 5½ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

11 *The actor Azuma Tōzō I* (on the stage 1730–74) *as a beautiful girl pulling a basket of flowers on a truck.*

Signed: Torii Kiyomitsu. About 1753. Printed in green and red (*benizuri-ye*). Published by Sakaiya.

Size: $11\frac{3}{8} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ in. *Lent by Lord Harlech.*

SUZUKI HARUNOBU (d. 1770)

Harunobu was born in 1718, 1725 or 1730 according to different authorities, and was a pupil of Shigenaga. He came to the fore with the invention of the five-colour print in 1764, and from then until his death in 1770 he was far the most influential designer, his style being imitated by nearly everyone and his signature often forged.

12 'Rei', *Decorum. A girl helping another to dress for a ceremonial occasion.* One of a series of the 'Five Virtues'.

Signed: Harunobu. About 1766. Printed in full colours, with use of gauffrage, on special paper.

Size: $10\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

13 *A girl washing clothes in a stream and a boy with a shrimping net.* One of a series illustrating the 'Six Tama Rivers'.

Signed: Suzuki Harunobu. 1765–70.

Size: $10\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

14 *A Taiyu followed by two Kamuro with two Shinso behind.*

Unsigned, but attributed to Harunobu. 1765–70.

Size: $11\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

15 *Morning Breeze in the Fan.* One of a series of 'Eight Indoor Views', an analogue of the eight classic landscape views, in which this corresponds to favouring wind on a clear day.

Second state; unsigned. Probably 1766. The first state of these prints bears the name Kyosen, the head of a literary club, who must at least have suggested the

subjects, if he did not have a hand in designing them. The finished designs are no doubt by Harunobu, whose name is found on the third state. For reproductions of the first states see F. W. Gookin, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Moslé Collection*, 1927. His set is now in the Art Institute, Chicago.

Size: 10½ × 7¾ in. *Lent by Lord Harlech.*

ISODA KORIUSAI (Worked about 1765–86)

A pupil of Harunobu who excelled especially in bird and flower prints and in pillar print designs. After 1780 he worked mainly at painting in ink.

16 *A girl and a youth, who is knocking the ash from a pipe, outside a house beside which lespedeza is growing.*

Signed: Koriusai. About 1768. The ground is a faded blue.

Size: 9⅞ × 7⅜ in. *Lent by Wilfrid Blunt, Esq.*

17 *The Courtesan Takikawa followed by two attendants.* One of 'New Patterns for Young Leaves' (i.e. Girls). A series of fashion plates.

Signed: Koriusai. About 1776.

Size: 15¼ × 10¼ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

IPPITSUSAI BUNCHŌ (Worked about 1765–80)

Bunchō was a man of the Samurai class and trained in the academic Kano school of painting. He only designed prints for a little over a decade, but his work is always distinguished and he had a fine sense of colour.

18 *A girl holding a rooster outside a tooth-brush stall.* Beside her is a cockerel, perhaps an allusion to the Year of the Cock in the zodiacal cycle, which could be either 1765 or 1777.

Signed: Ippitsusai Bunchō.

Size: 12⅛ × 5⅝ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

19 *A group of four actors in a play: Sanogawa Ichimatsu II as a woman and Nakamura Denkuro II* (acted 1733–75) *standing behind Sawamura Sōjurō II* (acted 1749–69), *all of them looking up to Saka Hangoro II* (acted 1742–82).

Signed: Ippitsusai Bunchō. Seal: Mori. About 1769. Printed in colours on a yellow ground. From the Hayashi Collection.

Size: 12⅛ × 5⅝ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

20 *The Actors Ichikawa Kōrmazō I holding a monkey-mask, and Arashi Otohachi* (acted 1732–68) *holding a fan, as two members of Otokodate, an order of Chivalry.*

Signed: Ippitsusai Bunchō. Seal: Mori. About 1768. Printed in colours, largely without outline. From the collection of Madame Langweil: exhibited at the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs*, Paris, 1911. No. 172.

Size: 11¼ × 8½ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

TANAKA MASUNOBU (Worked about 1746–77)

The work of this artist is rare but of considerable charm. He started with hand-coloured prints, but under the influence of Harunobu produced five-colour prints.

21 *Monkeys leaning from a cherry tree teasing two girls.*

Signed: Masunobu. About 1765–70. Pillar print (*hashirakake*).

Size: 27⅜ × 4⅝ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.* (PLATE Ia)

KITAO SHIGEMASA (b. 1739; d. 1819)

A pupil of Shigenaga, he was influenced, in early life, by Harunobu.

22 *Two girls sheltering from the rain under an umbrella beside the Noda (Chidori) River in Mutsu province, watching Chidori (sanderlings) in flight.* No. 5 of a series of the 'Six Tama

Plate Ia. MASUNOBU. Monkeys leaning from a cherry tree teasing two girls (No. 21)

Plate Ib. KIYONAGA. Lady with a fan walking under a tree (No. 34)

Plate II. KIYOMASU II. The actor Ichikawa Monnosuke I as a woman holding a theatrical wig (No. 3)

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Plate V. SHIGEMASA. Two girls sheltering from the rain under an umbrella watching sanderlings in flight (No. 22)

Plate VI. KIYONAGA. Maple viewing (No. 32)

Plate VII. TOYOKUNI. The actors Ichikawa Danjuro VII and Ichikawa Konozō in the play entitled *Sendai Hagi* (No. 56)

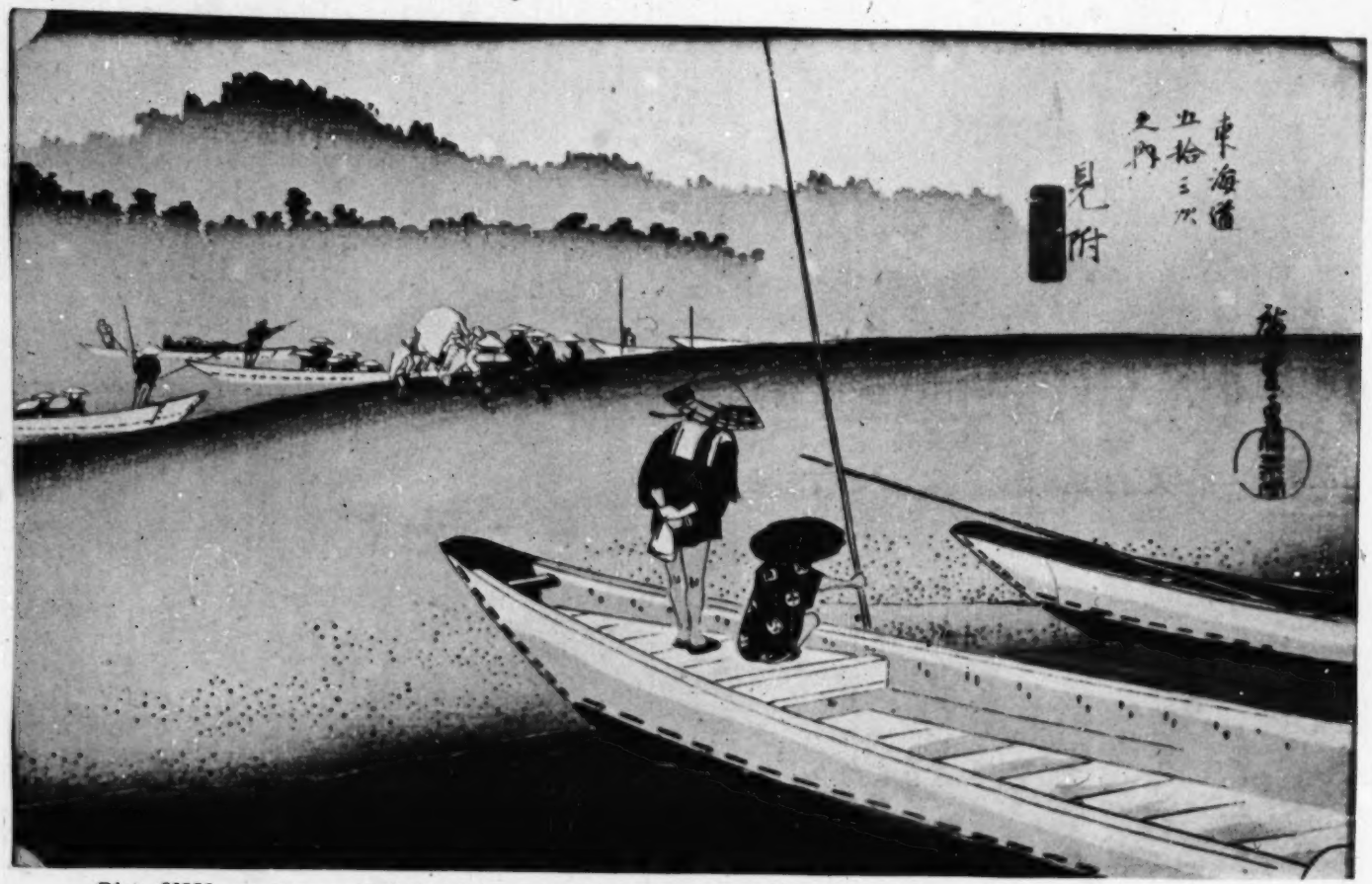

Plate VIII. HIROSHIGE. Mitsuke, one of the Fifty-three Posting Stations of the Tokaidō (No. 71)

Rivers' in Ukiyo version. In the label is a poem by Norin Hoshi.

Signed: Kitao Shigemasa. About 1766. Printed in colours. Exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1933, No. 16. Another print of this series is in the British Museum Collection. (R. N. Shaw gift.)

Size: 12¼ × 5⅜ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.* (PLATE V)

KATSUKAWA SHUNSHŌ (b. 1726; d. 1793)

A man of Samurai birth, Shunshō was very poor in youth. He was trained as a painter and did not start to design prints until about 1764 and he only formed his style of actor print, in which he quickly made a reputation, in 1769. From that time he was extremely prolific and thousands of prints were designed by him and the Katsukawa school which he founded.

23 *Two girls standing on a balcony looking over a lake.* In the label an ode by Takuren. One of a series of 'Three Evening Odes'.

Signed: Shunshō. About 1770. From the F. W. Gookin collection.

Size: 10¼ × 7⅜ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

24 *Shoki the demon-queller grasping an* oni (*demon*) *and threatening it with a sword.*

Signed: Katsukawa Shunshō. Pillar print (*hashirakake*).

Size: 27½ × 4¾ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

25 *The Actor Ishikawa Danjūrō V as the mad monk Seigen and Uchikawa Danzo IV as Oniwo in the play* Yedo no hana mimasu *played at Nakamura-za in* 1783.

Signed: Shunshō. On a grey ground.

Size: 12¾ × 8⅞ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

26 *The Actor Ichikawa Danjūrō in character.*

Signed: Shunshō. On a grey ground.

Size: $12\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{7}{8}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

27 *The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove*, represented by women, a parody of a traditional Chinese subject.

Signed: Shunshō.

Size: $15\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{3}{8}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

KATSUKAWA SHUNKŌ (b. 1743; d. 1812)

Shunkō was a pupil of Shunshō and worked between 1771 and 1791, when his right arm became paralysed.

28 *The actors Yamashita Kinsaku II as a woman standing holding a painting* (kakemono) *and Nakamura Sukegorō I seated grasping the end of it.*

Signed: Shunkō. About 1783.

Size: $12\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{7}{8}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

29 *The Actor Ichikawa Yaozo III holding his drawn sword.*

Signed: Shunkō.

Size: $12\frac{1}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{8}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

30 *A wrestling match between East and West*, the names of the two sides at the half-yearly meetings. The wrestlers, Sekiwaka Tanikare and Sekiwaka Ōnogawa. Sekiwaka is a title of excellence at this sport.

Signed: Shunkō. About 1789. Publisher: Toyojima Ya Bunjiyemon (1773–1806).

Size: $14\frac{1}{8} \times 9\frac{7}{8}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

KATSUKAWA SHUNYEI (b. 1768; d. 1819)

Shunyei was a younger pupil of Shunshō, who developed a style of his own.

31 *Kurokumo the wrestler in private attire, walking with a tea-house girl.*

Signed: Shunyei. Censor seal (*kiwame*). About 1800. Grey ground.

Size: 15 $\frac{5}{16}$ × 10 $\frac{5}{16}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

TORII KIYONAGA (b. 1752; d. 1815)

During the 1780s he was the leading print designer, but seems to have retired from this field soon after 1790.

32 *Maple Viewing.* From a series of Yedo fashions entitled 'Brocades of the East in Fashion'. The right sheet of a diptych.

The sky was originally blue, but has changed colour.

Size: 15$\frac{1}{8}$ × 10 in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.* (PLATE VI)

33 *A cherry-viewing party.* This is the right-hand sheet of a diptych; in the left sheet (British Museum L.B.24) a little girl is hanging a poem on one of the trees.

Signed: Kiyonaga. Reproduced by Von Seidlitz, *A History of Japanese Colour Prints*, 1910, facing p. 110.

Size: 14$\frac{3}{4}$ × 10 in. *Lent by Mrs. Audrey Stewart.*

34 *Lady with a fan walking under a tree.* Above is a verse: 'A beautiful woman is more attractive if she is not seduced by her desires.'

Signed: Kiyonaga. Pillar print (*hashirakake*).

Size: 28$\frac{1}{2}$ × 4$\frac{7}{8}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.* (PLATE 1b)

35 *A maid placing sandals on the step of a house for two ladies to step into as they go out.* One of a series of 'Short Satiric Poems'. The poem means: 'When the small girdle is worn it gives life to the hips.'

Signed: Kiyonaga. About 1783.

Size: $10\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

KATSUKAWA SHUNCHŌ (Worked about 1780–1800)

Though originally a pupil of Shunshō, Shunchō early ceased to design actor-prints and followed instead the example of Kiyonaga in depicting beauties of the day.

36 *Five girls watching a performance: behind is an open window.* The left sheet of a triptych.

Signed: Shunchō. About 1790–5.

Size: $14\frac{7}{16} \times 9\frac{11}{16}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

37 *Ladies in a Garden overlooking a river.* Part of a triptych.

Signed: Shunchō.

Size: $14\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{8}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert Esq.*

38 *Three girls out walking with a boy attendant.*

Signed: Shunchō.

Size: $15\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ in. *Lent by Lord Harlech.*

KITAO MASANOBU (b. 1761; d. 1816)

A pupil of Shigemasa, Masanobu was a distinguished writer; under the name Santo Kiōden. His prints, which are not numerous, were probably all produced before 1789 and are marked by a special grace and rich colour scheme.

39 *Two Girls walking.*

Signed in cursive (*sōsho*) writing: Kitao Masanobu.

Pillar print (*hashirakake*).

Size: $27\frac{3}{8} \times 4\frac{5}{8}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert Esq.*

KITAGAWA UTAMARO (b. 1753; d. 1806)

Son and pupil of the book illustrator Sekiyai, Utamaro started his career as a painter and black-and-white illustrator. Only about 1785 did he start to work in colour and he designed few separate prints before 1790. But he quickly outstripped all competitors in the portrayal of women. His favourite types became more and more elegant and elongated until by 1800 they are so unnatural as to be almost grotesque. But by about 1804 he had returned to a natural ideal type.

40 *Utamaro painting a screen in one of the Green Houses, is admired by three girls.* This self-portrait illustrates 'Painting' in a series of *The Five Accomplishments, Kin-ki-sho-gwa.*

About 1790. British Museum (L.B.14).

Size: 14¼×9⅝ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

41 *Yamauba, the wild woman who found him and brought him up, shaving the head of Kintoki the strong boy, lost in the mountains.* Utamaro delighted to represent this pair.

Signed: Utamaro. A faded impression is in the British Museum (L.B.52). From the Hayashi collection.

Size: 15¼×10 in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

42 *Figures in Chinese costume and in a Chinese setting playing 'Kitsune Ken', the 'fist-game'*, in which different positions of the fingers represent the fox, the gun and the head-man. The left-hand sheet of a triptych, a complete impression of which is in the British Museum (L.B.100).

Signed: Utamaro. Early work, probably before 1790.

Reproduced: Vignier & Inada, *Outamaro*, 1912, pl. 26.

Size: 14¾×9⅝ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

43 *A young woman standing and looking down at another kneeling before a* koto, *a stringed instrument.* 'The Superior Class' of a series of 'Customs of three classes of Young Ladies'.

Signed: Utamaro. In full colour on a yellow ground. Another of this series is in the British Museum (1926–1–12–01).

Size: 15½ × 10⅛ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

44 *Catching fireflies at night.* The centre sheet of a triptych.

Signed: Utamaro. About 1795. The entire triptych is reproduced by Vignier & Inada, *Outamaro*, 1912, pl. 81.

Size: 14⅜ × 10¼ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

45 *Two women, drawing water at a well, use it as a mirror for their toilet.* Hour of the *Hare*: 5–7 a.m. One of a series of 'Customs of Beautiful Women by the Clock'.

Signed: Utamaro. Grey ground. An impression is in the British Museum 1937–19–10–068.

Size: 14½ × 9½ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

46 *O-ishi, the wife of Yuranosuke, with Tonase in the temple-headdress, and her daughter.* An illustration to Act IX of the Chiushingura—the Play of the 47 Rōnins—in the guise of girls of the day.

Signed: Utamaro.

Size: 13¾ × 9½ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

47 *Kintoki holding up a mask of Okame, the goddess of good humour, before the face of Yama-uba.*

Signed: Utamaro.

Size: 13⅜ × 8⅞ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

CHOBUNSAI YEISHI (b. about 1746; d. 1829)

Yeishi was a Samurai by birth and trained as a painter in the Kano school. He did not start designing for prints until about 1780 and ceased soon after 1800. The first syllable of this name is pronounced like the French 'é'.

48 *The Lady of Good Luck.* One of a series of 'Lucky People', probably intended as an analogy of the 'Seven Gods of Good Luck'.

On a yellow ground with mica used on the collar of the under dress. Subject reproduced by Von Seidlitz facing p. 118 (L.B.11).

Size: 14½ × 9⅞ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

49 *Lady arranging flowers.* One of a series of 'Six Elegant Accomplishments'.

Signed: Yeishi. Censor's seal (*Kiwame*). On faded yellow ground. An impression of the outline block is in the British Museum (L.B.12).

Size: 14¼ × 10 in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

50 *Poetry.* One of the same series of 'Six Elegant Accomplishments'.

Signed: Yeishi. With the use of blind printing (gauffrage) on the sleeves.

Size: 14⅜ × 9¾ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

51 *Prince Genji waited on by two ladies, who hand him his court hat* (eboshi) *and outer coat* (haori). They wear contemporary dress while his clothes are intended to be of the period. A sheet from a series of triptychs illustrating the Genji Monogatari.

Signed: Yeishi.

Size: 14¼ × 9⅜ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

52 *Prince Genji with three ladies by the door of a house.* A sheet from the same series of triptychs illustrating the Genji Monogatari.

Signed: Yeishi.

Size: 15⅛ × 10¼ in. *Lent by Mrs. Audrey Stewart.*

MOMOKAWA SHIKŌ (Worked about 1780–90)

He worked towards the end of the eighteenth century, under the influence of Utamaro; his special liking being for large heads and shoulders. He is probably identical with the artist Choki who worked in the style of Kiyonaga and Yeishi.

53 *Two girls seen half length, one holding a lantern, the other a fan, outside a restaurant advertising roast Chidori (plover).* One of a series illustrating the 'Six Tama Rivers', one of which is called Chidori.

Signed: Shikō. Print of special size.

Size: 18¾ × 6⅞ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

CHŌKĀSAI YEISHŌ

54 *A seller of Waterfall Water.*

Signed: Yeishō. Exhibited 1913 at the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs*, Paris, No. 40 and pl. 12. From the Le Veel Collection.

Size: 15¼ × 10⅛ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

TŌSHŪSAI SHARAKU

A Nō dancer in the service of his Daimyo of Awa at Yedo, who designed some 136 prints of extraordinary character in the years 1794–5, but gave up because of the lack of appreciation that he found.

55 *The Actor Iwai Hanshiro IV as Chichinohite Shigenoi, the wet-nurse heroine of the play* Koinyōbō Somewake

Tazuna *which was played at the Kasarazaki-ya in the fifth month of* 1794. She holds an amulet bag.

Signed: Tōshūsai Sharaku. Mica ground. British Museum No. 25. Henderson and Ledoux's Catalogue No. 14. The subject reproduced by Vignier & Inada: *Kiyonaga, Bunchō, Sharaku,* 1911, pl. 68; and Otto Benesch: *Sharaku, Hokusai, Hiroshige,* Vienna, 1938, fig. 4.

Size: 15×9⅝ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

UTAGAWA TOYOKUNI (b. 1769; d. 1825)

The son of a sculptor in wood of Buddhist images, Toyokuni was trained as a painter by Toyoharu and became the head of the Utagawa line and principal designer of actor prints after the withdrawal of Sharaku in 1795. He produced very few prints after 1810.

56 *The Actors Ichikawa Danjuro VII and Ichikawa Konozō in the play* Sendai Hagi *which was written in* 1784 *by Matsu Kanobi for the puppet-stage.*

Signed: Toyokuni, the summit of perfection in old age. On grey ground.

Size: 14¾×9¾ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.* (PLATE VII)

57 *Bust portrait of an actor.*

Signed: Toyokuni. About 1795. Mica ground. Published by Yamaguchiya Chūsuke.

Size: 15×9½ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

58 *Interior of a dressmaker's work-room, with three women at work, one using an iron.* Part of a triptych.

Signed: Toyokuni. Censor's seal (*kiwame*). Early work, about 1795.

Size: 15×9¾ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

59 *The actors Iwai Kumesaburō and Nakayama Tomisaburō in a Kaomise, the annual opening of the season.*

Signed: Toyokuni. Before 1804. On a grey ground.
Size: 15⅜ × 10½ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

UTAGAWA TOYOHIRO (b. 1763; d. 1828)

Fellow pupil with Toyokuni of Toyoharu, he eschewed theatrical subjects.

60 *Preparations for the Dolls' Festival,* held each year on the third day of the third month when dolls representing all classes of society were arranged on a stand.

Signed: Toyohiro. About 1800. Triptych on yellow ground.
Size: each sheet about 14¾ × 9¾ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

61 *A young man holding a falcon on his gloved hand.*

Signed: Toyohiro. Pillar-print (*hashirakake*).
Size: 27 × 4⅞ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI (b. 1760; d. 1849)

Hokusai was the son of a (metal) mirror-maker and was apprenticed at the age of thirteen to a wood-block engraver whose craft he spent four years in mastering. He was then received, in 1777, into the studio of Shunshō, from whom he received the brush-name of Shunrō, which he used at least till 1796; in this year he took the name Sori and in 1797 added that of Hokusai which he used for the rest of his long life. He started to design *surimono* about 1797 and was at this period evidently interested in European perspective which he could have seen in prints imported by the Dutch through their factory at Nagasaki. From this time he formed his own style, but his first big landscape prints did not begin to appear until 1823, when he was over sixty, though the first volume of his

famous sketch-books, the *Mangwa*, appeared in 1814. During the next fifteen years Hokusai produced all the grand landscapes on which his reputation rests.

62 *A spring day.* A surimono, or new year print. Two men holding attributes of Daikoku and Benten, two of the Gods of Good Luck, with a woman between; Fuji in the distance.

Signed: Gwakiōjin Hokusai. About 1818.
Size: $8\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

63 *A Saké kettle, tea-bowl decorated with a horse, chopsticks and carved jar.* A surimono, or new year print. From 'A Series of the Horse', referring to the Horse year in the cycle, i.e. 1822.

Signed: Fusenkio I-itsu. Another print of this series is in the British Museum (L.B.86).
Size: $7\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

64 *Travellers crossing the sand to Enoshima.* No. 25 of the 'Thirty-six [actually 46] Views of Fuji', the great series published 1823–9.

Signed: Zen Hokusai I-itsu. British Museum No. 106.
Size: $9\frac{3}{4} \times 14\frac{1}{2}$ in. *Lent by Lord Harlech.*

65 *Coolies crossing a plank bridge at Nakabara in Soshu province.* No. 26 of the 'Thirty-Six Views of Fuji'.

Signed: Zen Hokusai I-itsu. Printed with black outline. British Museum No. 102.
Size: $10\frac{1}{8} \times 14\frac{3}{4}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

66 *Fuji from the Great Hall of the Temple of the Five Hundred Rakan at Yedo.* No. 32 of the 'Thirty-Six Views of Fuji'.

Signed: Zen Hokusai I-itsu. Printed with blue outline. British Museum No. 112.
Size: $10\frac{1}{4} \times 15\frac{1}{8}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

67 *The Bridge of Boats at Sano, province of Kozuke, under snow.* No. 2 of a series of eleven 'New Views of Famous Bridges in various Provinces'.

Signed: Zen Hokusai I-itsu. Printed with black outline. Published 1829–30. British Museum No. 155.

Size: $10\frac{1}{8} \times 15\frac{1}{8}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

68 *The Waterfall of Ono, on the Kisokaidō.* No. 2 of a series of eight entitled 'Going the Round of the Waterfalls of the Country'.

Signed: Zen Hokusai I-itsu. Published about 1827. British Museum No. 147.

Size: $14\frac{5}{8} \times 10$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

69 *Kiyodaki, the Fall of Pure Water, beside the shrine of Kwannon at Sakanoshita on the Tokaido.* No. 3 of the series entitled 'Going the Round of the Waterfalls of the Country'.

Signed: Zen Hokusai I-itsu. About 1827. British Museum No. 148.

Size: $14\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{7}{8}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

70 *Hunters round a fire in the snow.* An illustration of a poem by Minamoto no Muneyuki:

> Winter loneliness in a mountain hamlet grows
> Only deeper when guests are gone
> And leaves and grass are withered;
> So runs my thought.

No. 28 of a series of illustrations of the famous early anthology the *Hiakunin Isshu*, entitled 'The Hundred Poems explained by the Nurse'.

About 1835. British Museum 1920–5–14–010.

Size: $9\frac{7}{8} \times 14\frac{1}{2}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE (b. 1797; d. 1858)

Hiroshige was a pupil of Toyohiro. About 1830 he was so much impressed by the beauty of the eastern highway (Tōkaidō) that he started to record it, and so produced his first big landscape series. He continued to travel and design prints until his death in 1858. His later prints owe a great deal to the printer.

71 *Mitsuke, Tenrui-gawa, the river of the Heavenly Dragon.* No. 29 of the 'Fifty-three Posting Stations of the Tokaidō', which was published in 1833. This is his first important landscape series, and it illustrates scenes on the great East Coast road from Yedo to Kiōto.

Signed: Hiroshige.

Size: 10 × 14⅞ in. *Lent by Mrs. Audrey Stewart.* (PLATE VIII)

72 *Kinkakuji, the Golden Pavilion on the shores of a lake,* built in 1393 by the Shōgun Ashikaga Yoshimatsu (d. 1408) as a retreat. One of a series of 'Ten Views of Kiōto' (*Kiōto Meisho*).

Signed: Hiroshige. Published in 1834. British Museum No. 168.

Size: 9⅛ × 14⅜ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

73 *Arashiyama: at the foot of the rapids on the Oi river at the time of cherry-blossom.* One of the series 'Ten Views of Kiōto'.

Signed: Hiroshige. British Museum No. 176.

Size: 9½ × 14⅝ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

74 *Sunset at Seta.* One of the 'Eight Views of Lake Biwa' (*Omi Hakkei*).

Signed: Hiroshige. Seal: Hōyeidō. Published in 1835. British Museum No. 128.

Size: 9⅞ × 14⅝ in. *Lent by Michael Withers, Esq.*

75 *Seba: Willows against the moon.* No. 32 of the series of the 'Sixty-nine Posting Stations of the Kisakaidō'.

Signed: Hiroshige. Seal: Ichiryusai. Published about 1839. British Museum No. 220.

Size: $9\frac{1}{8} \times 14\frac{1}{8}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

76 *Beneath Ryogoku bridge under the full moon.* One of a series of 'Views of Yedo in the Four Seasons: Summer'. *Tanzaku* (panel) shape.

Signed: Hiroshige. The winter sheet of this series is in the British Museum (Ricketts and Shannon bequest).

Size: $14\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. M. Cooper.*

77 *The Tama river by moonlight: women pounding cloth.* One of a series of 'Six Crystal Rivers of various Provinces' (*Shokoku Mu Tamagawa*).

Signed: Hiroshige. Dated 1857.

Size: $14\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{8}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

78 *Sarashina rice-fields by moonlight.* An uncut print for a fan-mount, printed in blue and black only.

Signed: Hiroshige.

Size: $9\frac{3}{8} \times 11\frac{3}{4}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

79 *Kanazawa Bay, Musashi, under the full moon.* Triptych; one of three published in 1857.

Signed: Hiroshige.

Size: each sheet $14\frac{7}{8} \times 10$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

KEISAI YEISEN (b. 1790; d. 1848)

Yeisen was the son of an artist and brought up in the Kano tradition; but he joined the Ukiyoye school and worked with Hiroshige in the series of seventy Views on the Kisokaidō, the inland highway from Kiōto to Yedo, to which he contributed twenty-three designs.

80 *Snow at Asakusa Temple.*

Signed: Yeisen.

Size: $9\frac{1}{8} \times 14\frac{1}{4}$ in. *Lent by Mrs. Audrey Stewart.*

81 *Keigon Waterfall.* One of a series of 'Views among the Nikko Mountains'.

Signed: Yeisen.

Size: $14\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$ in. *Lent by W. Gilbert, Esq.*

The following books are referred to in this Catalogue:

1. *Catalogue of Chinese and Japanese Woodcuts in the British Museum.* By LAURENCE BINYON. 1916. (L.B.)

2. A Series of Catalogues by MM. Vignier and Inada of successive exhibitions of Japanese Woodcuts held at the *Musée des Arts Decoratifs,* Paris, between February 1909 and January 1914

3. *A History of Japanese Colour Prints.* By W. VON SEIDLITZ. 2nd edition. London, 1920

4. *Japanese Prints of the Primitive Period in the Collection of Louis V. Ledoux.* New York, 1942

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